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ABSTRACT

The National Ed.D. Program for Educational Leaders at Nova University is a targeted, multi-state, quality-controlled, time and study-intensive, three-year doctoral program. The program is operated both at the university and externally. It has been in operation for five years and has awarded 261 degrees. The program projects its goal as the improvement of the elementary and secondary schools in the United States by focusing on the managers of the schools (the principals) as opposed to the projected incoming leadership. Central to the program's goals are requirements which demand that candidates carry out school improvement projects which involve a process of task definition, resource allocation, and product (the product being evidence of change in the school system the person is working within). Two of these practicums of a year's length are required, one involving a working group and one the individual. This basic design allows students to work alone and with colleagues in small clusters. Outstanding scholars and practitioners drawn from universities and educational systems all over the country provide a national point of view through systematic interaction with participants, colleagues, and lecturers from other areas and backgrounds. Annual summer institutes bring participants together for exchanges with each other and leaders in the political world. (DMT)

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
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SPEAKER: Donald P. Mitchell, Director, National Ed.D. Program for Educational Leaders, Nova University, Fort Lauderdale, FL

TOPIC: A Different Drummer

PLACE: Room 18, Convention Hall

TIME: 2:30 p.m., Saturday, February 21

PROGRAM: Page 57

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Summary of Remarks

The Chairman's charge is a thirty-minute description of this program's philosophy and operation. In this Bi-centennial year, it seems appropriate to declare at the outset that we at Nova are following a different drummer. To clarify this distinction between cymbols and symbols, it will be necessary at various points not only to allude to what we do believe, but also, in order to make a point, to specify practices and procedures present in many other doctoral programs in which we do not believe. In doing this, we are not assuming an attitude that the Nova Program is "the right program" and that it should become a "model" for other programs; rather, our posture is simply that here is an alternative which should be available for those who feel the need for a different tune and a different drummer. Those who believe that there is only one proper path to heaven or the Ed.D. should leave right now!

Briefly, the National Ed.D. Program for Educational Leaders is a targeted, multi-state, quality controlled, time and study intensive, three-year doctoral program which is also operated in an external format. It is not simply a traditional program with a different delivery system. It is a different program which requires a different delivery system.

A TARGETED PROGRAM

The aspect of the Nova program which most distinguishes it from other programs, regardless of where the programs are offered, is very simple to state.

The program for educational leaders is a targeted program. By that we mean that we are aiming at a particular client and particular result. Our goal is the improvement of the elementary and secondary schools of this country. To do this we have focused on the group that we perceive as offering the greatest potential for effecting such improvement of these schools. We refer to this group as providing the fulcrum for change and our goal is to help each participant in the program make his own crowbar to move the system.

Why did we select this particular group? There are about 40 million children attending the elementary and secondary schools in the United States today. Somewhere around 2.2 million college educated persons are serving in various capacities in this large-scale educational enterprise. This is the largest number of college-trained persons involved in any single endeavor in this nation. Some are teachers, some are counselors, some are librarians, some are dieticians or psychologists. On the other hand, some are the managers of the schools. They are the assistant principals, principals, the supervisors, assistant superintendents, and superintendents. Those

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of you attending this American Association of School Administrators meeting do not have to be reminded of the wide responsibilities that administrators hold for operating the schools. The relative size of the groups involved bears evidence to this responsibility. This vast governmental system which involves management of funds from local, state and national levels is second only in dollars committed to the defense establishment. Only 135 thousand persons out of the over two million college educated group of professional educators have the management responsibility in the administrative jobs that we have just mentioned. Of these, a very small number (less than 15 thousand) hold doctoral degrees. The remaining group of 120 thousand is Nova's target population. Of that number this program can provide for a maximum of 1,000 persons every three years.

Back to what is not our target. Our target is not individuals in higher education, individuals in state departments or school board members or bright young people who might become school administrators. The pipeline is now full of trained individuals. The pipeline is full of bright young teachers who hold masters degrees who have no chance of becoming school administrators. In fact, the situation is so bad with regard to overtraining in this area that some states have a 75 year backlog in certificated administrative personnel as compared to jobs that will be available.

Our program is targeted at a specific group, namely those persons already in the principalship (our shorthand term for the middle management group) because we think it desirable and feasible to tailor a program which offers promise for school improvement.

ARE WE HITTING THE TARGET?

Keep in mind that this discussion is not a proposal for what might be. We are talking about a program that has just begun its fifth year. To this point some 1,250 degree candidates have been admitted. Some of these candidates now are in their first months of the program - others completing their fourth year - others have dropped out. This program for leaders has awarded a total of 261 degrees (all between April, 1975, and February 21, 1976.)

Central to the program goals are requirements which demand that candidates carry out school improvement projects. These projects involve a process of task definition, resource allocation and product. The product is not simply a research paper but a requirement to show evidence of change in the school system. We call these practicums. An extensive first year training program is necessary to teach our participants what a Nova practicum is and how to carry one out. As of the end of 1975 some 400 maxi-level practicum reports had been accepted by the practicums staff. A "maxi" practicum is the program's term for a year long practicum endeavor. Two of these are required-one involving a working group and one purely individual work.

We are finding that there is value in these practicums beyond the learning for the participant and the improvement in his particular school or school system. Where this local value seems "transferable" in the staff's view, the practicum is sent to the ERIC system to make it widely available to persons with similar problems or hopes. A recent issue of the Gatekeeper's Gazette, our house organ, lists a number of these with sufficient identification and detailed abstracts to extend their usefulness to the broader educational community.

We are sure that not every practicum is a bulls-eye on the target but we are equally sure that many are hitting the target and that all are aimed at it.

NATIONAL (A STATE OF MIND - NOT A STATE OF RESIDENCE)

Except for about a half dozen institutions of higher education in the U.S., doctoral training programs for practitioners are largely local and, at most, state-wide efforts. As foundation and federal support is drying up, fewer and fewer opportunities

are available at these half dozen national institutions. This is a lamentable development but none the less inevitable given the present ascendency of regressive economic views. Most persons in education obtain their masters and doctorates in the state where they work. In some large metropolitan areas the state boundaries blur a bit but the geographic proximity of job and school hold.

We at Nova believe that provincialism is not something to glorify and expand during a period when more and more problems are so evidently national and international in scope and complexity.

Our target is persons already in administrative jobs and the present system makes these persons (Our candidates' average age is 42) captives of a geographic area. Declining enrollments equal declining opportunities for administrators to move; retirement programs are designed to make moves too expensive; local school boards favor local patronage in promotion - these are only a few of the reasons operating to result in place-bound professionalism.

So, if the individuals cannot bust out of the system and get a national perspective, and we think such an exposure is important, then we must bring it to the participants on their home turf or through other methods.

NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The basic design of the program permits participants to work alone and with colleagues organized into local clusters. Outstanding scholars and practitioners drawn from universities and educational systems all over the country provide a national point of view through systematic interaction with participants, colleagues and lecturers from other areas and backgrounds. Annual Summer Institutes bring participants together for exchanges with each other, Nova Staff, academicians from various other disciplines, and leaders in the political world. There is no equivalent in American education to the Nova Summer Institutes in addressing the problem of provincialism among school administrators.

School leadership requires a broad knowledge of social, political and economic forces at work in the society. Too narrow concentration on mechanical or logistical problems tends to perpetuate parochialism and failure of leadership. This program has therefore been fashioned to bring expertise and breadth of learning to participants. The behavioral sciences and related disciplines have been integrated and focused on the role of administrators in the school system. Practicum projects pursuing solutions to actual problems within the sphere of influence of the individual participant are also an essential part of the program. The school systems in which Nova participants are administrators constitute a national laboratory in which practicum proposals are explored, tested, implemented, and evaluated.

As we are now seeing our first graduates complete the program successfully, one of our basic assumptions will be tested. We believe that the three years involvement as single and multi-cluster groups experiencing the program will foster continuing professional relationships after the degree is attained. Thus a network of national contacts with peers and resource persons will continue to help individuals throughout their careers with their never-ending problems in school management.

QUALITY CONTROL AND EQUITY

There are eight study areas deemed necessary for professional development: Curriculum Development, Education Policy Systems, Evaluation, Finance, Managing the Schools, Resources for Improving Education, Supervision and Technology and Systems Management. Each study area was conceived to present a perspective rooted in

more

traditional disciplines and to provide the necessary breadth of interdisciplinary understanding. Within these eight substantive areas, many additional topics are explored. Among them are school law, teacher's and student's rights, statistics, research, criticisms of educational systems, and proposals for reform. Each substantive area is considered from the local, state, and national point of view and each is taught with sufficient flexibility to accommodate individual objectives. Clusters are als encouraged to respond to critical issues in their own localities and to bring local authorities into the discussions.

National lecturers with rich backgrounds of academic achievement and practical experience are responsible for formal instruction. Working under the guidance of the Nova Director of Instruction the senior national lecturer in each subject area designs his own program of study, selects and monitors associate lecturers, and evaluates participants' scholarly activity. Each study area is designed to be addressed in a three-month period. Instruction is conducted in a day-long, intensive seminar under the general direction of the senior national lecturer who conducts the first seminar in a given subject on a Saturday after which his associates conduct subsequent seminars. A month of independent study, cluster, and often sub-cluster, work intervenes between appearances of lecturers at a cluster location.

Because of this senior lecturer responsibility and authority over instructional materials, associate lecturers and examinations, and because all participants in the program experience the same materials and lecturers we can state with conviction that the program is the same in California as in Florida.

The Director of Practicums is responsible for all practicums and maintains not only a monitoring role over the personnel in practicum review but actually reads and revises or accepts <u>every</u> review in his department.

We believe that we are delivering even-handed, equitable treatment to all participants in all aspects of the program. Those participants who feel differently have access to an appeals procedure via their peers - previous program graduates. The appeals procedure was suggested by the participants themselves at a Summer Institute.

TIME AND INTENSITY OF STUDY - FACT AND FANCY

Many persons claim that on-campus programs have more personal continuous interactions with faculty, more exposure to library resources, and other accouterments of full-time extended living on campus. They state that off-campus programs are unable to provide intensive study and that depth of learning suffers. What are the facts? The fact is that the great majority of Doctoral degrees granted in the area of educational administration in the United States today are granted to individuals who have not spent extended periods of time in full-time study. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) had, until recently, a requirement that NCATE member schools should have a year of "Full Time" study for the Doctorate in Education. However, a questionnaire jointly sponsored by NCATE and a study of the principalship found that this requirement was more professed than practiced.* In fact, of the 76 NCATE members responding to this 1970 questionnaire, only three reported that all of their students were full time and six of these reported over 90 percent part time.

A corollary of part-time study as offered in traditional programs - a course here - a summer there - is that the average length of time for degree completion in administration and supervision, Ed.D. and Ph.D. programs is seven years. This is hardly the intensive experience put forth by proponents of the Hopkins and log model.

*See table at end.

Now - at Nova we do believe in intensive experiences and have so designed the program delivery system and time requirements that the doctoral candidates are kept moving on a predetermined sequence of exposures and schedule of requirements for a three-year period. An additional year is permitted for those who have encountered some difficulties in process but beyond the fourth year time extensions are not given except in the most unusual, documented circumstances.

Truth in Advertising

The American people are becoming more and more alert to the common deceits of the hard sell. They look with caution, if not suspicion, at the claims for tooth paste and motor cars. Are they as alert to question the claims of higher education groups? I have raised one question concerning the claim that on campus programs are more time intensive than our external degree program. Please note that this is a response to a claim put forth by the proponents of "on campus" programs. It is not something that has ever been stated before by persons associated with this program.

We have, however, made a number of claims which we believe are understood by those who subscribed to the program and, in fact, become candidates.

Because we are a new program, an alternative program, a multi-state program, we have enjoyed more scrutiny than any other training program in administration in this country. This process has been a very time consuming, expensive, and nonproductive concern since the program started in February 1972.

However, we are happy to report that, to this date, we have not been deemed or ruled a non-quality program unfit to operate in the various locales where we have been asked to start clusters. In fact, a two year evaluation involving persons from all regional accreditation associations took close look at this program prior to the Southern Association's reaffirmation last December. This extension of Nova's accreditation was for ten years.

More importantly, the findings of independent questionnaire manufacturers have surfaced the fact that program participants believe we have been telling it like it is. The most recent of these that we have seen was completed at the University of Idaho Graduate School in November 1975 by Dennis Pytel.

His summary of findings included in part the statement: "Participants felt the institution was supportative of them as students. The institution's program was what the students had expected and they were satisfied with program quality, of the work demanded of them, with their fellow students and with the educational environment. Participants expressed overall satisfaction with their doctoral experiences and based upon that satisfaction all would again elect to repeat the external degree program."

Since Dr. Pytel, like everyone else who has asked, was given complete access to all program participants for the purposes of his study, I think we can be forgiven for pointing to his finding with some degree of pride.

Who Controls the System?

Even though we have been able, thus far, to build an alternative program and operate in a number of states to the satisfaction of most of our candidates, certain facts have become evident during the last four years. The most important of these concerns control. Here the history records a bitter behavior.

The traditional university types have absolute control over the training programs which provide personnel for the elementary and secondary schools of this country. They admit or do not admit persons to degree candidacy on the basis of their institutions criteria determined with little regard to special attributes of administrators. They direct the fo

of studies and the exposure of the individuals during the course of their degree candidac They control the placement system and they maintain life and death say so over the institution of new programs not only in states but in subdivisions of states. In addition, they constitute the great majority of persons manning research and national accreditation operations. Further, since graduates of traditional programs have been imbued with the goals and procedures of, and owe their jobs to the institutions promulgating conventional views, officers in State Departments, National Associations, Educational Journals, and other influential groups adhere to the same party line.

During the last four years the Nova Leaders' Program has been subjected to vilification largely by persons who have not troubled themselves to in any way find out what th program is about and in most cases, by individuals who know little or anything about training administrators. For example, the most well-known attack upon the program was mounted by Phi Delta Kappan in November, 1973. The author of the major attack article wa a professor in a Florida institution which does not have a program in administration; in fact, is not authorized to award the Doctoral Degree. The author to this day has not visited a Nova cluster in operation or the Nova campus program staff in spite of the fact that his major professor at NYU where he obtained his doctorate in the field of Physical Education personally invited him to visit and meet with the staff of the program. The ludicrous statements which he made were completely unsubstantiated. For example, he maintained that we were giving away several hundred degrees a year which he said was more than the three largest U.S. institutions put together. The visiousness of the attack was intensified when the editor of the journal in an editorial entitled "Nova as an Innovate" personally endorsed every statement of Moreland's and said he had documentation for each. When the editor was requested to furnish the evidence upon which he based his endorsement he was unable to do so.

The reason I am mentioning this at this time is the fact that those who call themselves researchers are continually referring to this trumped-up story without, in any way recognizing our detailed response in a later issue of the same journal. Incidentally, the editor in hot pursuit of us as a quarry was forced to print our article titled "Let's Get the Record Straight," only after legal action was threatened.

The most recent attempt at legitimation of Phi Delta Kappan's attack was provided by the Executive Director of National Advisory Council of Education Professions Development in April, 1975, in a report called "Gatekeeper's in Education - A Report on Institutional Licensing." He not only maligned us by rehashing the Physical Education major's article without reference to the detailed response but grabbed our term "Gatekeeper" whic we started using in 1972 to designate our Gazette on program activities.

I guess that the old saw which states that "the bigger the lie, the longer it lasts has some validity.

Consumers Arise

The persons attending this convention have a major stake in the training of the middle management for the elementary and secondary schools of this nation. You are the consumers of the products of Higher Education Institutions - their graduates. You must t what you are given as program products and you have little, if any say, in how they are selected, trained or degreed. In most instances you have little to say about certificati

Very little if any research is available as to the effectiveness of existing progra in producing leaders for our schools. Ironically enough the only ones I know of show qui the opposite. Neal Gross, while he was at Harvard about 15 years ago, conducted his National Principalship study which examined the effectiveness of principals in many major U.S. cities. His book, "Staff Leadership in Public Schools: A Sociology Study," asked whether there is any positive relationship between formal preparation and success in professional leadership. On the basis of a variety of elaborate tests, he found time and time again that the answer is "no." In fact, the less extensive the formal preparati

of principals, the greater was their staff leadership. "The findings offer no comfort to those who defend prevailing personnel practices in the schools and selection procedures of programs in educational administration at the colleges and universities," Gross wrote, "To school systems that rely almost completely on institutions of higher learning to prepare individuals for the principalship, this should suggest that they reconsider the practice; if the colleges and universities are not equal to the task, school systems may need to play a more important part in preparing principals for professional leadership

"The Oregon State University researchers, as reported by Goldhammer and Becker, saw the same thing. "One purpose of our study was to determine whether principal preparation programs were actually doing the job needed to help principals confront the problems of today's schools." We found a crisis in the preparation of principals that parallels the crisis of leadership in today's elementary schools. Principals who were effective could not be distinguished from those who were not on the basis of their formal preparation..."*

Let me hasten to reiterate what I stated at the outset. We are not proposing that this Nova program be a new model for developing leadership for the schools - one for others to copy. We believe it to be an effective alternative. However, we are firmly convinced that this alternative and all other genuine alternatives will be strangled by the traditionalists unless you, the consumers, start to play a responsible role in opening up the system and then exercising your consumer rights.

Proposal for Action

A great deal of attention has been put recently on the need for change in higher education. We have heard at length descriptions of what is wrong. Well reasoned and documented courses of action culminating in attractive reports have been distributed by The Carnegie Corporation. Kerr and Newman have issued clarion and hortative appeals for change. But - back at the ranch those tending the fields of educational administration programs have focused on mending the fences. The only call they have heeded is the primitive territorial survival instinct. Stay away from my terrain they growl. We now see clearly that rational presentations come to naught when survival is viewed as the true issue.

Concurrent with the higher education declamations has been AASA's and the local school districts answers. AASA has started, and continuously expanded its National Academy for School Executives and countless school districts have instituted administrative training programs. These are the practitioners answers to higher educations' default. Because higher education has ignored your needs you have been forced to get into training and upgrading endeavors. This attention to a side issue is diminishing your attention to your central job of educating children. Further, without the degree carrot, your in-service programs lack a powerful incentive.

Because it is not possible to assume that the rhetoric for change by certain leaders of higher education will result in change, and because you cannot continue to assume a greater and greater share of the burden of upgrading leadership training, it is time for you to exert your rightful role of consumer and to accept or reject according to the package ingredients. You must know what a particular Ed.D. stands for.

This great Association of the top managers of the educational enterprise is the only organization that can begin to make the producers of the personnel you hire accountable. The 135,000 persons I have already mentioned as running the huge elementary and secondary school endeavor are either members of AASA or hired by you. You are the only ones with power to effectuate change. Up to now you have preferred not to exercise this power.

*Keith Goldhammer and Gerald L. Becker, "What Makes a Good Elementary School Principal," Pg.49

You may still wish to leave the future to higher education personnel but, if you do, your right to criticize will then be gone.

What then might you and your associates do? I am suggesting that AASA, as the majo consumer of graduate school products for leadership roles, establish a commission to stud the situation, examine the role it might play and endeavor to turn around the presently defunct situation. The Association may wish to ask the Chief State School officers and the elementary and secondary school principals to join the Commission effort. However, I would caution against getting too broad a membership beyond those who have the primary consumer responsibility. As interested and helpful as the teachers and P.T.A. may be (an they can be involved in other ways) they don't do the hiring. After all - the buck stops on your desk.

Because this is a large task and one which has received little attention, at least recently, you will need considerable time and money to successfully accomplish it. You will need highly skilled staff and probably a period of three years for the gathering and analysis of the fa-ts. Beyond that, there will probably be a period required for discussion, dissemination, refinement and official action to find ways to implement the course or courses of action which best meet your goals. Foundation or Federal or joint funding of the effort will probably be necessary.

You will need to find the data and estimates of action on a number of questions. A few are:

1. How effective are graduates of various type programs as school administrators? What elements of these programs seem to contribute to their effectiveness- Lack thereof?

2. How do successful graduates feel about the programs which they have experienced? How do dropouts feel?

3. What are the societal factors affecting the pre-positional and inservice growth of school administrators? What is the best way to deal with these "inescapable" influences?

4. What mechanisms should be instituted to hold higher education institutions accountable for their products? Now, and in the future?

I am sure that the above are only suggestive.

Let me simply say that when you get your findings, this alternative program will receive them gratefully and endeavor to get closer to our main task of improving the schools.

NCATE Questionnaire Results

Cited on Page 7

Enrollments on Part-time Basis						
% of students enrolled part-time	Number of Institutions by Program Level					
	Masters		Specialist		Doctorate	
	%	No.*	%	No.	%	No.
100	7	13	17	20	0	0
90-99	54	94	41	49	8	6
80-89	12	21	12	14	11	9
70-79	9	15	2	2	11	9
60-69	2	3	2	3	10	8
50-59	4	7	7	8	19	15
25-49	4	7	8	9	18	14
1-24	6	10	2	3	15	12
0	1	2	2	3	4	3
Not reporting.	2	3	7	8	4	3
Total	101**	175	100	119	100	79

* Indicates number of institutions.
** Percentages have been rounded.